

Message Text

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ACTION PRS-01

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 PA-04 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00

INRE-00 SY-04 USSS-00 A-01 OPR-02 AID-20 SCSE-00

SCA-01 NIC-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-07 RSC-01 SP-03 SS-20 EUR-25 OC-06 CCO-00

IO-14 OCL-00 OMB-01 SCCT-02 DRC-01 /148 W

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SUBJ: UPI, AP POOL REPORT ON ETHIOPIA ELF KIDNAPPING

SECSTATE FOR S/PRS

REF: STATE 044639

POOLED REPORT BY UNITED PRESS INTERNATIONAL (UPI) AND
ASSOCIATED PRESS (AP) PLEASE FORWARD.

ADDIS ABABA MAY 29, 1974 -- THE ERITREAN LIBERATION FRONT
HAS ATTACKED A MISSION HOSPITAL IN THE TOWN OF GHINDA RPT
GHINDA IN THE NORTHERN ETHIOPIAN PROVINCE OF ERITREA,
KIDNAPPING TWO FEMALE NURSES AND LATER KILLING ONE.
THE DEAD WOMAN IS 54-YEAR-OLD MRS. ANNA STICKWERDA RPT
ANNA STICKWERDA FROM THE NETHERLANDS. SHE WAS FOUND
A FEW HOURS AFTER THE MONDAY MORNING ATTACK IN A VALLEY
ABOUT A QUARTER OF A MILE AWAY WITH A BULLET THROUGH HER
HEAD.

THE SECOND WOMAN WAS IDENTIFIED AS MRS. DEBORAH DORTZBACH
RPT DEBORAH DORZBACH, A 24-YEAR-OLD AMERICAN FROM
PENNSYLVANIA. (STILL TRYING TO FIND OUT MORE DETAILS)

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MRS. DORTZBACH, WHO IS FIVE MONTHS PREGNANT, WAS LAST

SEEN BEING FORCED OFF INTO THE HILLS BY HER FOUR ABDUCTORS. FEARS HAVE BEEN EXPRESSED FOR HER AS SHE IS IN EXTREMELY DELICATE HEALTH.

THE AMERICAN EMBASSY HERE LATER CONFIRMED THE STORY AND A SPOKESMAN SAID HE ASSUMED THE U.S. GOVERNMENT WAS IN CONTACT WITH THE ETHIOPIAN AUTHORITIES. IT WAS IN GHINDA THREE AND A HALF YEAR AGO (JANUARY 11, 1971) THAT AN ARMY COURIER, SPECIALIST RICARDO ECHEANDIA RPT RICARDO ECHEANDIA OF 345 BERRY STREET, BROOKLYN, NEW YORK CITY, WAS SHOT AND KILLED DELIVERING ARMY MAIL FROM KAGNEW STATION, AN AMERICAN MILITARY COMMUNICATIONS CENTER AT ASMARA WHICH HAS SINCE BEEN PRACTICALLY PHASED OUT.

THE AREA AROUND GHINDA HAS LONG BEEN REGARDED AS A STRONGHOLD OF THE ELF--A SEPARATIST ORGANIZATION WAGING WAR AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT OF EMPEROR HAILE SELASSIE.

THE TWO NURSES WORKED AT THE 50-BED AMERICAN EVANGELICAL MISSION HOSPITAL WHICH HAS BEEN THE TARGET OF PAST ELF RAIDS FOR MEDICAL SUPPLIES AND ALTHOUGH THERE HAVE BEEN SEVERAL ROBBERIES IN THE IMMEDIATE VICINITY THIS IS THE WORST INCIDENT IN THE AREA SINCE THE EARLIER KILLING.

LATER, THE MISSION HOSPITAL ADMINISTRATION ANNOUNCED THAT THE HOSPITAL BEEN CLOSED AND THE STAFF ARE BEING EVACUATED. GHINDA, ABOUT 25 MILES FROM THE PROVINCIAL CAPITAL OF ASMARA ON THE MAIN ROAD TO THE RED SEA PORT OF MASSAWA, IS NOT VERY FAR FROM THE SPOT WHERE THE ELF CAPTURED THE FIVE FORTH AMERICAN S (THREE AMERICANS AND TWO CANADIANS) JUST OVER TWO MONTHS AGO WHEN THEIR HELICOPTER WAS FORCED DOWN DURING A VIOLENT STORM. THE MEN, IDENTIFIED AS DON WEDERFORT, THE PILOT, OF CALGARY, ALBERTA; CLIFFORD JAMES, TORONTO, ONTARIO; WILLIAM CASCE OF TEXAS; J.W. ROGERS FO NEW YORK STATE AND MATTE TAVOLA FFROM CALIFORNIA WERE ABDUCTED BY THIRTY BANDITS AND LATER THE LEF CLAIMED RESPONSIBILITY FOR THEIR KIDNAPPING.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE ELF'S REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL, MR. IDRIS MOHAMMED ADAM, RPT IDRIS MOHAMMED ADAM, CONFIRMED THE MEN WERE ALIVE AND IN GOOD HEALTH AND SAID THEY WOULD BE FREED IN EXCHANGE FOR THE RELEASE OF POLITICAL PRISONERS, INCLUDING MANY CAPTURED ELF MEMBERS.

BUT HE REPORTEDLY SAID "ANY ATTACK AGAINST THE CIVILIAN POPULATION OF ERITREA WILL ENDANGER THE LIVES OF THE MEN."

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IT IS KNOWN THAT THE MEN HAVE BEEN SUBJECTED TO A FORCED MARCH THROUGH THE RUGGED MOUNTAINOUS INTERIOR APPARENTLY TOWARDS THE SUDAN BORDER. ENDS POOL. WYMAN

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED

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